JOHN ALEXANDER OF SHELBY COUNTY

1809 - 1883

A Biographical Sketch

By

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and

Winston Kelly Cullen

with

Sara Cullen Spain

Dedicated to the loving memory

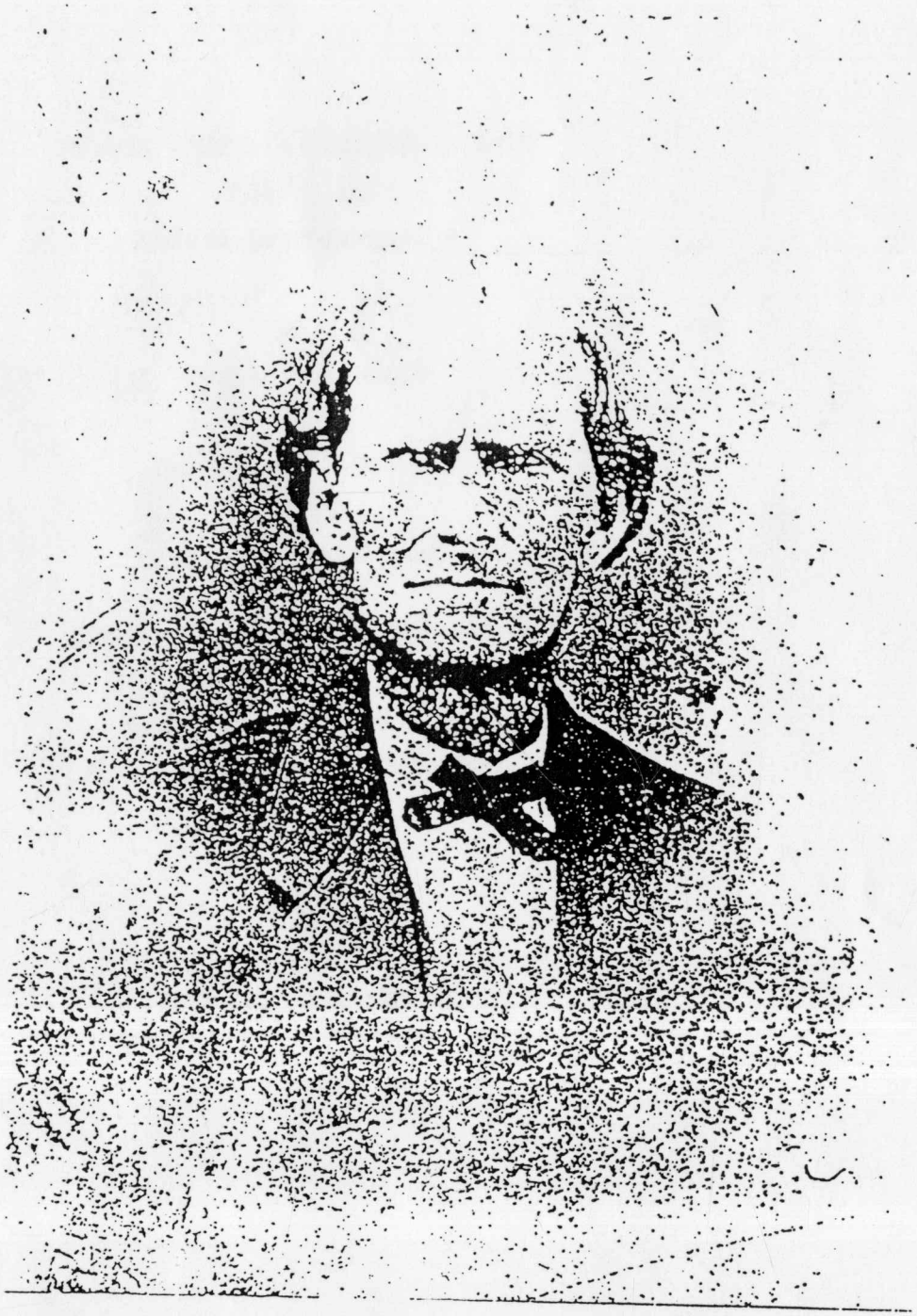
of

our beloved Grandmother

Capitola Alexander Misskelly

1863 - 1965

Birmingham, Alabama
September 18, 1992



JOHN ALEXANDER

1809 - 1883

Age 61

CAPITOLA ALEXANDER

1863 - 1965

Age 7

PREFACE

Kelly and I, are fortunate to be the two youngest grandchildren of James Edward, and Capitola Alexander Misskelly. We were bathed in their love and warmth until Grandaddy passed away at the age of 86, and Granny departed, many years later at the remarkable age of 101. Although gone, their memory will remain in our hearts forever.

This sketch of the life of John Alexander is based primarily on stories they told us, and then to research, the source of which, is acknowledged at the end of this work. At this writing, there is much yet to be learned, and many questions to be answered concerning information that we have discovered. It is hoped that in the not too distant future, we can expand this beginning into a full, and well documented biography.

Prologue

As I write this, I have beside me, John Alexander's small leather bound journal. The date on the first page is September 1, AD 1851. The pages are lined and numbered. He wrote on one line each day, his whereabouts, morning and evening; with a one or two word notation. Traveling on horseback over a wide area, he was often out of range of home at night. On these occasions he noted the place or family with whom he spent the night. Many pages are missing. The writing is so faded that reading is difficult and some is impossible. After being used as a journal for some months, it then becomes sort of a catch-all notebook. It was later used by other family members for various purposes, even the scribblings of children.

John wrote a lot of his thoughts in this little book. We find comments on the writings of Greek and Roman philosophers. In particular, he cites "The Lives of Plutarch". He lists new book to read; comments on temperance, behaviour, melancholia, and pens some original poetry. This verse, for the most part, is mournfully sad. My Grandmother gave me this book many years before her death. As far as I know, it is the only existing original record in his hand writing except for his actual signature found on two court documents.

I drove Granny to Montevallo on several occasions during the late 1940's and early 1950's. We traveled on the old Spring Creek road. At that time it was un-paved. Beginning near Elliotsville, it turned south, then west, winding along near the creek. She pointed to the old houses and told me who had once lived in them. These locations are hard to find today. Many have been razed or altered. The old road was straightened and paved. Much of it is now someone's driveway and other portions are completely erased.

Granny showed me the house where she and Grandaddy lived from the time of their marriage until shortly after the turn of the century. At the time that I saw it, it was only an uninhabited ruin. She pointed out the ford across the creek where the lane that led to John Alexander's home began. Here, he kept a lantern on top of a post to light the way across the ford.

On the last of these trips, about 1951, we drove across the ford and up the winding lane to the house where she was raised by John and Malinda Alexander. In sight of her childhood home, she wept.

The house was in a state of serious neglect. Two of the original seven rooms had been torn away, apparently the aftermath of a fire. There was the remains of a wrought iron fence across the front, with two hitching posts and a carriage block at the gate. The house was similar in desigh to a style known as "Carolina Cottage". There was a verandah around the four sides, all under the same roof. The chimneys were located so that each served two or more rooms. The kitchen, or cook-house, was a seperate building, connected to the house by a covered walk. Granny, although not able to walk very well, pointed to the north, where the houses for the field hands had stood, and to the ridge where a cemetary for them was located. She motioned to where the barn, smithy, and other out-buildings had been; and to the site on the creek where the mill had stood. It was only in later years that I was able to appreciate the emotion she experienced on seeing all of this in her 85th year.

On more than one occasion, we visited the Moore Cemetary, where John and Malinda Alexander, James D. and Sarah Alexander, and their mother, Mary Garvin Alexander are buried. It seems to me that there was one other Alexander grave here. After all of these years, I can't be sure of this, or remember the name. All of the gravestones were intact and legible at that time. Now, all except Malinda's are broken, apparently by vandals.

Granny, through her stories to us, gave all the clues that have led us through our investigations. So far, all of these stories that we have followed, have been borne out by fact. Those stories, not yet investigated, are not included here without a note of qualification. She never told us that she was adopted. We first found this when we read the last will and testament of John Alexander.

C.E.T.

John Alexander, born March 3, 1809 in York County, South Carolina, was the third eldest of the seven sons and five daughters of Henry Hastings Alexander and Mary Garvin Alexander. Henry Hastings was the son of Henry and Hester Rush Alexander, who were married on April 17, 1766. He was born on February 24, 1772, in Lancaster County Pennsylvania, and had three brothers and two sisters. This family moved to South Carolina in about the year 1791.

In about the year 1799, Henry Hastings Alexander, was granted some land and purchased other tracts of land in the vicinity of Yorkville and Bethesda Townships in the northwest part of South Carolina. It was here that he established his plantation and married Mary Garvin. John and his brothers and sisters were reared on this place near the town of York, AND ROCKHILL S.C..

We know little about John's childhood or the details of his education, except that it was certainly broad enough that he became a surveyor, and exhibited engineering skills in the design and construction of at least four water powered mills. He was also instrumental in the founding and development of "Roupes Valley Iron Works", now called "Tannehill". In his maturity, he was a huge man, standing six feet, seven inches tall; well over seven feet in his boots and hat. With a rather solemn countenance, he was an impressive, if not awesome, presence. He and his brothers were excellent horsemen. They enjoyed fox hunting and brought the love of this sport with them to Alabama.

Prior to his father's death on August 9, 1842, John married Malinda. She is named an heir to Henry's estate along with his wife, Mary, and all of their children.

John came to Alabama shortly after the death of his father. We find that he bought land in Roupes Valley in the year of 1844. This land lies within the confines of what is now "Tannehill State Park". He also, with a team of government surveyors, had a part in laying out the Town of Calera. On Feb. 28, 1847, ha was granted some land and purchased other lands between Calera and Montevallo in sections 3, 13, 14, 22, and 23. All lying in TS 22, R3W; section 28, TS 17, R2E; section 36 TS21, R2W; all in Shelby County. He also acquired land in section 17, TS24, R13E. in Talladega County; and in section 4, TS18, R15W in Pickens County. His brother, James D., was granted

or bought land in Tuscaloosa County, section 11, TS18, R12W. Brother Marshall, bought land in section 18, TS12, R5W near Roupes valley.

At some time between the year 1847 and 1850, John built a home on the north side and overlooking Spring creek, near and west of where the Alex Mill road crosses the creek. He established a farm on the surrounding land. This was to be his home until his death.

On June 16, 1852, he made further land purchases in Shelby County. These purchases were from military warrants issued to:. John Kerr, M. C. Cance, David C. Carson and Robert Turner. There was also one warrant issued for land to his sister, Lucinda's, husband, Charles W. Davidson; a descendent of the founder of "Davidson College".

The Davidsons came to Alabama and settled on land which later became the Town of Helena. James D. Alexander settled his family to the west , northwest of the Town of Calera.

At this time, John Alexander had accumalated in excess of 3,800 acres of land in Alabama. Most of this land was located in a triangle formed between Elliotsville, Calera and Montevallo. He now turned his attention toward populating this land and making it productive.

On the 1850 agricultural census, John declared that he was farming 180 acres of improved land, and 320 acres of un-improved land at a value of $3,000.00. He valued his implements at $400.00, and counted 4 horses, 6 cows, 4 oxen, 10 cattle and 60 hogs, all valued at $560.00. He listed production of wheat, rye, corn and oats.

Shortly before the year of 1854, John wrote to his mother, and brothers and sisters still living in South Carolina, and urged them to move to Alabama. He offered them a home near to him, with a dwelling and 572 acres of land; all for the price of $1,450.00. They found this to be both desirable and acceptable. After selling such of their property in South Carolina as they thought to be advisable, they equipped a wagon train suitable to transport themselves, servants and personal property across Georgia to their new home on Spring creek near where the Cumberland Presbyterian Church now stands.

Other South Carolina neighbors joined in this venture and settled on adjoining lands in Alabama.

In the years between 1854 and 1860, John constructed a dam and water powered mill on the creek adjacent to his home. He built another mill further downstream in the southeast corner of section 15. Here, he ground corn, thrashed and ground wheat, made flour, and ginned and pressed cotton. It was also during this period that he formed a partnership with the now famous Ironmaster, Moses Stroup, to build and operate a blast furnace in Roupes Valley. (John and Moses undoubtedly had some previous contact in South Carolina). This venture is listed in the 1860 Manufacturing Census of Bibb County as the "Stroup and Alexander Forge". This was capitalized in the amount of $20,000.00. This venture was continued until Stroup sold out to John and moved on to build and operate the Oxmoor Furnaces in Shades Valley, south of the town of Elyton.

Moses Stroup's daughter, Sarah, married Marshall Alexander. He was living in their home when he died on March 31, 1878. He is buried in the Spring Creek Cemetary alongside his daughters, Hester, Sarah, sons-in-law John W. Hanbury, Marshall Alexander, and his infant grandson, Samuel Hanbury.

John and Malinda's farm prospered during the decade ended in 1860. It now consisted of 500 acres under cultivation and 1,600 acres of unimproved land. He valued this farm at $17,000.00, and listed his occupation as "planter". Mother Mary was listed on adjoining property as head of household, and "planter" of considerable worth. Living in her household were sons, Marshall and Robert, and daughters, Matilda, Delina, Margarite and Mary. Brothers, James D. and William had established their farms east toward Calera. Thomas was settled nearby.

Following secession and the beginning of The War Between the States, Mother Mary Alexander died on June 23, 1862. She was survived by her five daughters, six sons (Rush was killed in 1842), and numerous grandchildren. She was laid to rest in the Moore Cemetary, located near Moore's Crossroads between Elliotsville and Montevallo.

On August 18, 1862, John Purchased from brother Marshall, 198 acres of land near the Roupes Valley Iron Works. On October 3rd. of the same year, he bought the interests of brother Thomas and

Moses Stroup, in the Roupes Valley Iron Works; including land, mining rights and improvements in Bibb, Shelby, Jefferson and Tuscaloosa Counties. It is interesting to note that the consideration tendered in these two transactions is not stated. On the following day, John and Malinda, sold one fifth undivided interest in lands and mining rights en-compassing the Roupes Valley Iron Works to William L. Sanders and his wife ~~Jane~~ Anne Sanders of Perry County, Alabama. Again, the consideration tendered, is not specified.

On January 2, 1863, John and Malinda sold to Colin McRae, 200 acres of land for the sum of $4,000.00 in cash. This land is in section 18, TS21 R4W, lying along the Cahaba River in Shelby County. An exception is made for ferry priviliges previously granted to William Sanders. The road between Roupes Valley and Montevallo probably passed through this parcel of land. This road had been built to haul pig iron and iron products by ox cart to the rail head in Montevallo.

Soon after the date of November 14, 1863, John and Malinda being childless, adopted an infant girl. They named her Capitola. This unusual name was taken from a novel that John had recently finished reading. This adoption cannot be found in the records of Shelby County. There is strong reason to believe, although not yet fully researched, that "Cappie", as she was familiarly called, was the daughter of a relative of John and Malinda.

With the northern army's invasion close at hand, Malinda buried or hid, some of the family gold, silver and other valuables. Malinda died during the federal occupation, without telling anyone the location. The story of this "buried treasure" became widespread, and until well into this century, much searching and digging was carried out by Alexanders and others. If anything was ever found, the discovery was never divulged.

The harsh years of The War Between The States are well documented. There was much suffering and privation in Shelby County during the war, the long federal occupation and many years of re-construction. There were many widows and orphans. The Alexander families were generous with their less fortunate neighbors during these trying times.

John, having the most to offer, became legendary in his generosity. In addition to the stories passed from generation to generation, we have a written commentary by Mrs. Hattie Wyatt Prestridge in a letter to the Spring Creek Cumberland Presbyterian Church at sometime in the early 1960's. Here, quoted verbatim, are paragraphs four and five of that letter.

" I feel many of you would like to know more of the pioneers who made up the early church. The Alexanders stand out as there were such a large family of them. I beleive they came from South Carolina. They were very thrifty and religious. John Alexander was the one I heard the most of. He was married three times but never had any children. He raised many orphans, among whom was my mother's family, the Crumps. He never adopted either of her two sisters and one brother. He got a home for her brother with Clark Ingram. Mrs. Black, his neice, raised one and John kept one until her marriage. He also adopted a girl from an infant that is still living. Mrs. Capitola Black Misskelly. She lives in West End and belongs to that church there. She is almost 100 years old but is unable to remember. She is the oldest living member of your Church."

"One of the boys John Alexander and his last wife adopted made a Presbyterian minister. He was John Willis, better known as J. W.. He died many years ago. John Alexander surely helped a large number of widows and orphans and lived to a ripe old age. He also cared for 3 spinster sisters, Delinah, Matilda and Mary, who spent her last days with her neice, Mrs. Carrie Alexander Ingram. I knew all of them and spent many hours listening to their stories of early days. They were all charter members of our church and regular attenders until their deaths and each lived to be 90 or more and are buried in our cemetary."

Note that Mrs. Prestridge states that John was married three times. We have ~~only~~ found evidence of only two marriages. Also, she refers

to Capitola as Mrs. Capitola Black Misskelly. This, if correct, is a clue to the parentage of Capitola.

Capitola related that often, out of neccessity, John and Malinda filled in as physician and nurse for all that were ill, including his slaves. She also said that very few of his slaves left him after emancipation.

During the war years, the whole of the production at Roupes Valley Iron Works, was consigned to the Confederate States of America. Although the furnaces and forge was under the operation of William Sanders, on at least one occasion John Alexander signed as surety bond for the delivery of product to the Confederacy. This is certainly an indication that John still held a vital interest in the operation of the works during that period. Federal troops destroyed the iron works in ~~1864~~ 1865. The furnace built by Moses Stroup and the two added by Sanders were ~~blown up~~ DESTROYED. These raiders laid waste to the whole valley but somehow overlooked the old forge. Iron was never again produced here until an historic demonstration held IN 1976 after the opening of "Tannehill State Park".

After the close of The War Between States, John intended to rebuild the iron works. On November 27, 1865, he re-purchased the interests of William Sanders in the ruined works. This purchase included land, machinery, livestock, tenements and a tannery. (Bladoe Tan Yard) The purchase price was $40,000.00. The principal amount being the consideration still owed by Sanders to John Alexander for the purchase made in 1862.

Malinda, after a short illness, died on February 12, 1868. She was laid to rest beside John's mother, Mary Alexander, in the Moore Cemetary. Capitola remembered her father's grief that lasted until his death. The afore mentioned journal of John is filled with references to his suffering. He is pre-occupied with a concern over melancholia and pens a great many lines of terribly sad poetry, one line of which, particularly reflects his intense grief.

" I often wish that I was dead
and laid beside her in the tomb,
in the tomb of my sweet Kitty Wells"

Capitola related that many years after Malinda's death, there had once been rumors of her having been poisoned by a servant. She heard this after John's death and was never able to find out the source or substance of such rumors.

Due to his grief, poor economic conditions and possibly failing health, John never rebuilt the iron works. After several prospective buyers, including General Josiah Gorgas, the former Chief of Ordinance, C. S. A., and later President of The University of Alabama; he found a buyer in the person of David Thomas of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania. Mr. Thomas was later a principal in the fore-runner of the Republic Steel Corp.. This sale was consumated in Selma, Alabama on October 14, 1868. The Roupes Valley Iron Works was sold for the sum of $25,400.00, $15,000.00 of which was paid in cash and $13,400.00 in notes; including interest, payable at he National Bank of Calasqua, Pa. over a period of six years. He also sold to Mr. Thomas, the lands encompassing the iron works, a total of 2,615 acres, for the sum of $27,400.00 cash; less than $1.05 per acre.

So, after flirting with destiny, as a pioneer in the great iron and steel industry that was yet to come to the not yet founded cities of Bessemer and Birmingham, John Alexander was out of the iron business.

At some time during the federal occupation, John was escorted to Montevallo by troops. He was to be questioned or tried, and possibly hung, for some offense against the United States. This was told to us by Capitola. We have yet to find, although not fully researched, that he was prosecuted or otherwise penalyzed. He returned home within a short period of time. It is to be noted that this was during the period when "carpetbaggers and scalawags" held full sway in state government. group of vigilantes, organized to protect the innocent and weak, against the pillaging; quasi-legal and otherwise, of the agents of this notoriously corrupt government. The vigilantes were known as "The Blackwell Gang", and they were headquartered in or near Montevallo. It is within the realm of probability that John Alexander had some connection with this legendary gang. Possibly during this crisis, John decided to have his and Capitola's photograph made. Placing the age of Capitola as six or seven years, we assume the date of the photographs as 1869 or 1870. These photographs, appearing at

the beginning of this sketch, were apparently made at the same time. The mountings are identical.

All on the same day, January 18, 1870, John sold a total of 2,269 acres of land, along and near Spring creek, to family members. The sales were principally to his brothers, William, Thomas, Robert and Marshall. This is remarkable, indicating that some anticipated crisis of health, or possibly the confrontation with the occupation government caused him to make this disposition. Whatever the cause, most of the lands described in these sales did not in fact change hands, and were included in John's estate.

In the 1870 census, we find John and Capitola living, along with servants, in the home on Spring creek. His declared worth at this time was: $5,000.00 in real property, and $118,000.00 in personal property. The buying power of this estate in todays currency would far exceed a million dollars.

At some time between the year 1870 and 1872, John married Sarah Ann. Her maiden name and origin is presently unknown. She was born in Alabama of a father born in Tennessee. These marriage records cannot be found. They adopted a son whom they named John Willis.

Capitola related that when she was eight or nine years old, her father gave her a pony and side-saddle. She eagerly learned to ride, and rode around the premises at every opportunity. As she became proficient, and more adventuresome, she sneaked rides on her father's horses and even a mule. One day, John caught her riding bare-back, astride a horse. He scolded her. She said that this was the only time she could remember him speaking harshly to her. John provided her with an adequate education, mainly through tutoring in the home by a teacher named Samuel Harrell. There was undoubtedly some family connection with Mr. Harrell because his son, or grandson, often visited Capitola up until her death. He was called "Cousin Abe", and was a Spanish American War veteran.

John spent the decade between 1870 and 1880 tending his plantation and mills, more or less in retirement. It seems likely that he made investment in the coal and iron business that he had helped pioneer. He placed the following notice in the SHELBY SENTINEL, 9/20/1877

"GRINDING: The public is respectfully informed that my mill is now in good working order and is ready to grind all corn and wheat brought To the mill. I used the "Leffel" wheel and it is worth a trip to the mill to see it running. John Alexander"

The 1880 census shows John living in the home on Spring Creek, aged 71, with wife, Sarah Ann, aged 50, Capitola, aged 17, John W., aged 6; along with six servants.

In the latter part of 1880, a dispute over land arose between sisters Delina, Matilda and Mary Alexander against brothers, William and Marshall Alexander. A lawsuit was filed in Shelby County. This dispute was over land sold by John to his mother, Mary and his brothers and sisters. There is quite a bit of animosity shown and recorded in this suit. It was dismissed, principally due to the statute of limitations. Although tedious to read, a copy of the court records have been included as supplement " A ". There is quite a bit of Alexander family history contained in these papers. It is remarkable that John Alexander did not give testimony.

During the year 1880, John contacted James Edward Misskelly, aged 21, in York, South Carolina, and offered him a job as overseer. John's mother, Mary Garvin Alexander and James Edward's grandmother had been sisters. The Alexander and Misskelly families were neighbors in South Carolina. John had known Ed's (as he was familiarly called) father, DeKalb, and was aware that DeKalb had been killed in the second battle of Manassas. (2nd. Bull Run) DeKalb's wife, Nancy Eleanor, died in grief soon after, leaving Ed and his sister, Elizabeth, orphaned. Subsequent events in South Carolina also left them without an inheritance.

James Edward accepted this offer. On horseback, leading a mule loaded with his possessions, he rode from South Carolina to Alabama. John gave him residence on the south side of Spring creek, opposite John's house near the mill. Ed helped run the mill, ran the plantation store, and did whatever required of him as overseer. He also, seemingly according to John's hopes, fell in love with, and courted Cappie. They were married on February 13, 1883.

Ed told that during the time he was courting Cappie, that he crossed over the creek to John's home on a foot log. Following the alloted time for courting, John usually asked him to sit awhile, talk awhile, and drink a little whiskey. He said that John made very good whiskey, and that being such a big man, John could make way with quite a bit of it. Often, after these highly refreshing conversations, Ed said, " I had to coon that log to get home, and a few times fell in the creek anyhow."

On April 29, 1883, after an extended illness, John Alexander died. The cause given was "consumption". Cappie and Ed said that they were prevented from seeing him for some time before his death. The reason given, being, he was too sick to receive visitors. He was laid to rest beside his mother Mary, and his wife, Malinda, in the Moore Cemetary.

The following obituary appeared in the SHELBY SENTINEL, 5/3/1883

"ALEXANDER:"

"At his residence near Montevallo. On Last Sunday at 2:00 PM, Mr. John Alexander, an old and highly esteemed citizen. For a number of years he had been in feeble health, and his death was therefore not un-expected. Mr. Alexander was a native of South Carolina, we believe, but removed to this section and settled on the place where he died, about forty years ago. He was twice married but leaves no children. He was a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. A man of large heart, kind, benevolent, and charitable, he was noted for his hospitality, and the poor and needy always found in him a friend. He was 65 or 70 years of age."

John's last will and testament is dated eight days before his death and was witnessed by E. M. Carleton, and Dr. Ralph Davis. (his physician) Named as beneficiaries of the estate were: Wife; Sarah Ann Alexander
Sisters; Delinah, Matilda and Mary Alexander
Brother; Robert Alexander
Nephew; J. O. Alexander
Beloved adopted child; Cappie Misskelly
A copy of this will is attached as Supplement (B).

Thus ended the life of a good and truly remarkable man. Largely ignored by history, he came within a hairs breadth of becoming one of the widely recognized figures in the Alabama iron and steel industry. A hair's breadth can be as wide as a century.

THE END

E P I L O G

Sarah Ann Alexander and J. N. Suttle were the co-executors of John Alexanders Will. Sarah Ann married E. M. Carleton, one of the witnesses to the will, on July 18, 1884. Mr. Suttle died on October 10, 1886, leaving Sarah Ann Carleton as sole executor of the extate.

On June 30, 1887, Delinah and Mary Alexander brought suit against Sarah Ann Carleton, alleging the estate was being mis-managed and wasted This suit resulted in the removal of Sarah Ann as excutrix, and the court appointed a special "Master" to administer the estate until a final settlement and conclusion is reached. Sarah Ann alleged that the estate was insolvent. She also entered a plea that a "widows exception" be set aside for herself.

The inventory of the assets of John Alexander is obviously incomplete and grossly under stated. Never once, is any amount in cash, securities or investment, mentioned; whatsoever. The listed indebted ness of the estate for the greatest part is to Attorneys and Law Firms. Nevertheless, a commission (including Dr. Ralph Davis A witness to the will) is appointed to determine the "widows exception". This litigation continues past the year of 1890, and at this writing, we still have not researched it to its final conclusion. It is noteworthy that some of the names in this litigation are to be found connected to transactions in the formation of land and industrial developments of the 1890's and early 1900's.

R E M I N I S E N C E

Recently, through the courtesy of Mr. Homer Lee and his family, we were able to again visit the site of John Alexander's home. It was bull-dozed some years ago. All that remains is rubble, containing hand made bricks,cut stone and remnants of huge planks and beams. Mr. Lee owns and was reared on this property. He played in and around the old house as a young boy. His father wanted to restore the house, but found the cost to be prohibitive. Some remains of ornamental shrubbery still grow among huge and ancient cedars. There is a stone lined well near a very big cedar. On this tree, about chest high, dimly seen, is carved; "Cappie and Edward". This is all that remains of the John Alexander home, where peacocks once strutted and a little girl rode side-saddle on her pony.

The creek still runs clear and lively across the ford. Mr. John Murphy owns the property on the south side of the ford, below John Alexander's old home-site. Mr. and Mrs. Murphy make their home on this pleasant, rolling land. He has constructed a dam a few yards east of where the old mill dam stood. The resulting pond is complete with small pier and boat. A picnic table stands on the shore. A hundred or so yards east of the Murphy home, we were shown another stone lined well. Nearby, is an old flower bed that they found and restored. Bulbs planted by Cappie, over a hundred years ago, still bloom. Between the well and flower bed, Grandaddy and Grannie's house once stood. Here, four of their five children were born.

If you stand here in this quiet and shady place, reflecting on the stories you heard long ago; look up to the old Spring Creek road, and you can almost hear the thunder of hooves, as "Wilson's Raiders" gallop east toward Montevallo.

C. E. T. 9/18/92

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

MANY HEARTFELT THANKS TO:

MRS. GLORIA PETERSON FURMAN: Descendent of the James Oliver Alexander family. For sharing her wealth of Alexander family data gathered over many years of hard work. For accompaning us on field trips. For her hospitality, hours of conversation and her genuine interest in our project. For transcribing the Alexander vs. Alexander law suits. Without Mrs. Gloria, we would still be on "square one."

MR. AND MRS. H. C. ALLEN: Descendent of the pioneer Allen family who settled in the Spring Creek area in the early 1800's. For stories about John Alexander and our Grandparents. For telling the location of ~~the location of~~ the old homes in relation to the present road, and giving us the names of helpful contacts.

MR. AND MRS. HERBIE INGRAM: Descendent of the pioneer Ingram, and James Oliver Alexander families. For showing us the abstract title of his land that was deeded to his Grandfather by Marshall Alexander. For ~~showing~~ SHARING his old photographs and memories. For warm conversation and the hospitality of their home.

MRS. KATHLEEN ALEXANDER BRIDGES AND SON, MILTON BRIDGES: Descendents of James Oliver Alexander. For extending the hospitality of their home in the original house of William Alexander. For sharing old photographs and memories. For showing antiquities found along the creek. For excellent photographic work by Milton.

MR. AND MRS. EARL EVANS (MADINE): Officers of the Shelby County Historical Society. For always making us welcome at the Archives and Musuem of the Society located in the old Shelby County Courthouse in Columbiana. For locating documents for us even before we asked. For their abiding interest. Their help was, and still is, indispensible. Without their aid and encouragement, we wouldn't have even made it to "square one".

MR. KENNETH PENHALE: President of The Shelby County Historical Society. For the hospitality of his home and information shared. If it were not for public spirited citizens who labor to preserve the evidence of our past, history would be dim, indeed.

MRS. EDNA MCCALLIARD: Secretary at the Shelby County Historical Society For knowing just where to look for what you need to know. Her patience and kindness are endless with all who beseige her with, sometimes dumb, questions.

MR. AND MRS. HOMER LEE, THEIR SON, JAMES: AND SISTER, ELIZABETH LEE-SABO: For the hospitality of their home. On three occasions they took the time to tramp about the site of John Alexanders home and mill, pointing out the locations of where buildings had stood. For re-inforcing the story of "Malinda's buried treasure" by telling us that people in recent times had searched for it.

MR. AND MRS. JOHN MURPHY: For the hospitality of their home. For showing their abstract of title that recorded John Alexander's previous ownership. For giving us a tour of the old mill-site. For pointing out the spot where our grandparents house had once stood. For demonstrating his generator at the dam that he constructed.

SENATOR JIM BENNETT: Alabama State Senator and Superintendent of Tannehill State Park. For spending an entire day with us at Tannehill. Sharing information about John Alexander and Moses Stroup. For an excellent lunch at the Furnace Master Restaurant, and a personally guided tour of the entire park and museum. For tips on research and introduction to Mr. James Walker. Thanks to Sen. Bennett and his staff for the excellent job in the restoration of this historic site. The work continues, and they deserve all the praise, gratitude and help that comes their way.

MR. JAMES WALKER: Artist, Author and Teacher. For a pleasant early evening spent at his studio near McCalla. For his pointers on research. For stories of the families of this section of Jefferson County. For writing his excellent HISTORY OF ROUPES VALLEY.

THE LINN-HENLEY RESEARCH LIBRARY: For its vast rescources and considerate, HELPFUL STAFF.

THE PROBATE COURT OF SHELBY COUNTY: For patience in allowing us access to the old records stored in a "dungeon", deep in the bowels of the Courthouse. For not complaining of us climbing up and down the stairs, through their offices to make copies from volumes weighing fifteen to twenty pounds.

TO ANYONE I HAVE LEFT-OUT: I plead "creeping senility", not in-gratitude or lack of courtesy.

SUPPLEMENT (A)

Delina Alexander et al

vs

William Alexander et al

In chancery, at Columbiana, Shelby Alabama. To the Honorable Thomas Cobbs, Chancellor of the Western Chancery Division of the State of Alabama.

Humbly complaining respectfully showeth unto your Honor, your oratrixes Delina Alexander, Matilda Alexander and Mary M. Alexander, each of whom is over the age of twenty one years and resides in said Shelby County.

First, that their father Henry Alexander died in the year 1842 in York District in the State of South Carolina, leaving in said District a considerable property consisting of lands, negroes and other personal property. That besides your oratrixes the said Henry left surviving him the following children to wit: William Alexander, T.H. Alexander, R.T. Alexander, M.N. Alexander, John Alexander, James D. Alexander, Margaret M. Alexander who afterwards married Thomas B. McCluskey and Lucinda Alexander who afterwards

married Charles W. Davidson, and said Henry also left a widow, Mary Alexander. That after the death of their said father, their mother, the said Mary and your oratrixes and her said brothers and sisters except the said John, the said James D. and the said Lucinda, remained in possession of the property both real and personal and held and cultivated and worked the same, paying off all the debts of their said father from the proceeds thereof, and supporting themselves out of the same, until about the year 1854.

Second, that their said brother John and James D. and their sister, Lucinda, moved to Alabama some years before said year. That during or about said year 1854 their said brother John, who had accumulated a considerable pjroperty in Alabama and being desirous for his said mother and his brothers and sisters then residing in South Carolina to move out to Alabama proposed to them if they would sell out their property in said State and move on a place owned by him in said County of Shelby near where he then resided he would sell the same to them at a greatly reduced price to wit: The sum of Fourteen Hundred and fifty dollars. That the ~~trct~~ TRACT of land which he proposed to let them have contained about four hundred and ninety two acres and is more particularly described as follows: to wit: the N 1/2 of Sec. 12. The N 1/2 of S.E. 1/4 and E 1/2 of the SW 1/4 all in Section 12, all in T.2 R3, and twelve

acres in the SW corner of the NW 1/4 of Section 7 in T22 and R2. That after they came to Alabama as hereinafter set forth, finding the improvements on it insufficient to accomodate the family, the said John agreed to let them have in addition to the land above described the following to wit: the E 1/2 of the NE 1/2 except ten acres he deeded to one Ingram south of the creek and on the west side of said east half, and ten acres in the NE corner of the W 1/2 of said NE 1/4 all in Section 14 T22 R3 West.

Third, that their said mother, your oratrixes and the said other brothers and sisters accepted the said offer of the said John Alexander, sold the lands then owned by them in South Carolina and such of the personal property as it was deemed advisable to sell and moved out and took possession of said place above described under said agreement and paid for same in full out of moneys arising from the sale of such property in South Carolina or from other moneys belonging to them jointly. That the said John neglected and failed to execute to them a deed to said lands, but your oratrixes and their said brothers have continued to occupy and use said lands to this time, that their mother the said Mary Alexander resided thereon 'til her death which occurred on to wit: The 22nd day of June, 1862, and their said sister the said Margaret, the wife of Thomas B. McClusky, left the same when she was married in the year 1855.

Fourth, that on the 5th day of February, 1870, their said brother, John made and executed a deed conveying to their said brother William a portion of the land described in the second paragraph of this bill of complaint, which said portion so conveyed is more particularly described as follows to wit: The NE 1/4 and N 1/2 of the SW 1/2 of Section 12 T22 R3 and twelve acres in the SW corner of the NW 1/4 of Section 7 T22 R2 West containing two hundred and fifty two acres more or less. That said Williams at the time of the agreement under which your oratrixes and the other of said parties took possession of and held said lands and was a part thereto, and that no other consideration than that set forth in the second and third paragraphs of this bill was paid by the said William or any other person for said lands a copy of said deed executed by the said John to the said William is hereto attached marked Exhibit A, and prayed to be taken and treated as a part of this bill of complaint.

Fifth, your oratrixes further aver that the said William holds said lands in trust for the benefit of your said oratrixes and the said other parties mentioned in the first paragraph of this bill who were entitled to the same under the agreement made with their said brother John, and who are now living, and for the heirs at law of those who died since said transaction was had in the year 1854, and

is bound in equity and good conscience to convey to each of them his or her respective undivided interest therein. Oratrixes further aver that the said William in disregard of his said duty has failed and refuses to so convey and denies the right of your said oratrixes and said other joint owners to any portion of said land and claims the same as belonging absolutely to him free from all and every claim or interest of any of said joint owners.

Sixth, that their said sister the said Margaret McClusky died during the year 1879 and left surviving her, her husband Thomas B. McCluskey, and the following children to wit: Sarah T. McCluskey, Mary Z. McCluskey, Margaret A. McCluskey and Lucy B. McCluskey. That the said Thomas B. and all his children reside in said Shelby County and that all of them are (21) twenty-one years of age except the said Lucy, who is a minor over fourteen years of age. That the said John Alexander, William Alexander, T.H. Alexander, R.T. Alexander, M.N. Alexander, James D. Alexander and Lucinda Davidson are all over twenty one years of age and reside in County of Shelby, and that the said Lucinda is now a widow.

The premises considered, your oratrixes respectfully pray that to obtain the relief hereinafter prayed and that the defendants to

this bill may answer the several paragraphs therein as by note hereunder written they are required to do, that the said Thomas B. McCluskey, Sarah T. McCluskey, Mary Z. McCluskey, Margaret A. McCluskey, Lucy B. McCluskey, William Alexander, John Alexander, M.N. Alexander, James D. Alexander and Lucinda Davidson may be made parties defendant to this bill of complalint by proper subpoena requiring to answer plead or demur to the same as provided by law. And upon the hearing they pray your Honor to decree that the said William Alexander holds said lands described in the fourth paragraph of this bill in trust for the benefit of complainants, and the said other parties mentioned in the ——— Two lines ARE illegible ———

who are now living and for the heirs at law of those who died since said transaction was had in said year 1854. And may your Honor further decree and direct that the said William execute a deed conveying to each of complainants and said other parties and heirs the undivided interests in said lands to which they are entitled under the facts herein before set out and alleged, and should they have mistaken the relief as may seem to your Honor just and equitable. And in duty bound they will ever pray and c.

Troy Tompkins

J.N. Arrington

Solicitors for Complts.

John Alexander's Will and Testament

SUPPLEMENT (B) Exhibit A

The State of Alabama

County of Shelby

I, John Alexander, of the County of Shelby and State of Alabama, being of sound mind, judgement and discretion, realizing the uncertainty of life and the certainty of death, each being in the hands of an allwise God, and desiring and with the intention to make a disposition of my earthly goods in accordance with my wishes, I now commend my soul to the God who gave it and make and pubish this my last will and testament and being now free from all influences of whatever character, and acting solely upon the promptings of my own feelings with deliberation and a due consideration just as I desire without restraint I do now in the presence of my God and the witnesses who sign and attest this instrument make, publish, declare and proclaim this my last will and testament.

1. I will and desire to be buried in a neat and Christian like manner.

2. I will and desire that all my just debts shall be paid

3. I will and bequeath all my personal property consisting of mules horses cows and cattle of every description, wagons, buggies, carriages and all vehicles of every description, hogs goats farming

utensils and implements and machinery, gin heads and all fixtures, thrash fan and every kind and description of personal property to my beloved wife, Sarah Ann Alexander and my three sisters Delina, Matilda, and Mary M. Alexander during their natural lives and at their death to belong to my said wife Sarah Ann Alexander, and her heirs forever. Now if the said Sarah Ann Alexander, my wife, shall survive my said above named three sisters then and in that case the said personal property, all of it, vest absolutely in my said wife and her heirs, and if my said wife Sarah Ann Alexander should die leaving surviving her any either or all of said sisters above named, then the sister or sisters so surviving shall use or control all of said personal property until their death, and at their death to go to the heirs or assigns of my said wife Sarah Ann Alexander.

4. I give and bequeath to my beloved wife Sarah Ann Alexander the following described real estate lying and being situated in the County of Shelby and State of Alabama to wit: all of the SE 1/4 of Section 15 Township 22 Range 3 West lying between Shoal and Spring Creeks and all of the SW 1/4 of Section 15 Township 22 Range 3 West lying east of Shoal Creek and all of the NE 1/4 of Section 22 Township 22 Range 3 West, except that portion bequeathed to Robert Alexander herein below, to have and to hold enjoy and control forever.

5. I give and bequeath to my beloved wife, Sarah Ann Alexander the

(8)
(b)

SE 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Section 11 Township 22 Range 3 West, the E 1/2 of NW 1/4, Section 11, Township 22, Range 3 West, the SW 1/4 of Section 14 Township 22 Range 3 West except that portion heretofore deeded to John Black, the W 1/2 of SE 1/4 of Section 14, Township 22 Range 3 West, the W 1/2 of SW 1/4 of Section 23, Township 22, Range 3 West, the W 1/2 of SW 1/4 of Section 11 Township 22 Range 3 West, the N 1/2 of NE 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Section 11 Township 22 Range 3 West together with the tenements hereditaments and appurtenances thereunto belonging including the Lower Mill on Spring Creek to hold and control during her natural life upon the following conditions, that my beloved sisters Delina Alexander, Matilda Alexander and Mary M. Alexander shall live with my said wife Sarah Ann on said above described tract or parcel of land and shall receive and enjoy support and maintenance and clothing and comforts equally with my said wife Sarah during their natural life out of the proceeds and profits arising out of and coming from said last above described lands either as rents or otherwise. Now if my said wife Sarah Ann Alexander should die and leave surviving either any or all of my said above named sisters then and in that event I will and bequeath said last above described lands to the sister or sisters above named that survive my said wife Sarah, to have and control and hold the same during her or their natural life equally: that is to say it is my will and desire that if my said

wife Sarah die before any or all of said above named sisters, said last above described real estata shall be owned enjoyed and controlled by or for the benefit of my said above named sister or sisters so surviving my said wife Sarah during her or their natural life that is during the life or lives of the sister or sisters so surviving my said wife Sarah.

6. And it my will that at the death of my said wife Sarah Ann Alexander and Delina Alexander Matilda Alexander and Mary M. Alexander my three sisters, that my beloved brother, Robert Alexander have to himself and his heirs forever the Lower Mill together with the mill yards on both sides of the Creek, the creek bed and all the rights, privileges and immunities of running and operating said mill on Spring Creek and all the land attaching to said mill to the south end of the section line about eighty acres more or less.

7. And at the death of my said wife Sarah Ann Alexander and my said sisters Delina, Matilda, and Mary M. Alexander, I will and bequeath all of the real estate described in Section 5 of this my will, except that part heretofore given to Robert Alexander in Section 6 of this my will, be equally divided share and share alike between my beloved brother Robert Alexander, my beloved nephew, J.O. Alexander and my beloved adopted child Cappie MisKelly to them and their heirs and assigns forever.

(4)

8. I will and desire that the tract of land owned by me in Bibb County, Alabama and known as ~~and~~ the Adams or Huey tract be sold by my Executors and the proceeds of said land be applied to the payment of my debts, said sale to be made either private or public without any order of court and a deed made by my Executors without confirmation or report of sale. And I also will and desire that the tract of land in Jefferson County, Alabama known as the Blado tan yard be sold under the same provision and in the same manner either at private or public sale and without any order of Court and deed made by my Executors without any order of Court to sell or any report or confirmation or order to make deed by any court and the proceeds of said last described tract to be applied to the payment of my debts, and if there should be any surplus on hand remaining after paying my just debts I give and bequeath the same to my beloved wife Sarah Ann Alexander.

9. It is my will and desire that if there is any other real estate owned by me that I have not designated or have left out of this will, that the same shall go to my beloved wife Sarah Ann Alexander and my beloved sisters Delina Matilda and Mary M. Alexander under the same terms and conditions and decreed in the same way to the same persons as the land set out in the paragraph five of this will.

10. I have constituted and appoint my beloved wife Sarah Ann

(e)

Alexander and J.N. Suttle my sole and only Executors of this my last will and testament, and to carry out the provisions of the same.

11. It is my will that my said Executors shall not be required to give any bond as such Executors unless said Executors shall waste or lavishly use the property in their charge, should this occur by application and proof of the same it is my will and desire that bond be required of my said Executors in the sum deemed just by the court.

12. It is my will that my said Executors shall not be required to make annual or partial settlements with any of the courts of this state or to account to any of said courts for the use or disposition of said property herein bequeathed unless proof of waste shall be made and then they shall be required to settle with the courts having jurisdiction of the subject matter herein named and their persons.

13. If my said wife Sarah Ann Alexander should die and leave surviving her Mary M. Alexander then and in that case the said Mary M. Alexander shall enter upon the duties as Executrix with the said J.N. Suttle and act as such without bond and under the same conditions as the said Sarah Ann Alexander my wife shall act as such Executrix up to the time of her death.

14. I will and bequeath all my household and kitchen furniture to my beloved wife Sarah Ann Alexander.

Signed in the presence of E.M. Carleton and Dr. Ralph Davis on this the 21st day of April 1883 and published as my last will and testament.

Attested and signed in the presence of testator and of each other.

E. M. Carleton John Alexander

Ralph Davis

Filed in office this 30th day of June 1887 N.A. Graham, Register

The State of Alabama

Shelby County

To any Sheriff of the State of Alabama

You are hereby commanded to summon Sarah A. Carleton personally to appear at the office of Register of the Seventh District of the Western Chancery Division of Alabama in the town of Columbiana in said District within thirty days after the serving of this summons on her to answer the original bill of complaint exhibited in said Chancery District by Delina Alexander et al complainant against said Sarah A. Carleton Respondent.

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